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ABSTRACT

This paper explores various aspects of voting behavior among nearly 900 British Columbia voters in the 1979 Canadian federal election. Specifically, the paper examines the aggregate significance of strategic choice in a voting situation and identifies factors which increase or decrease an individual's disposition tc act strategically. Strategic choice in a voting situation is defined as voting for an issue or candidate which is perceived as having the best chance of winning, although the issue or candiate is not the favorite. The method involved directing respondents tc answer questions about liking and disliking several political phenomena such as candidates and issues, perception of the relationship of choice of a local candidate and choice of government, assessment of the competetive situation in a local constituency, intent to defect for the purpose of defeating the least preferred alternative, predicted action if a preferred candidate or party has no chance to win, perception that a strategic opportunity exists, and opportunity tc respond to perceived opportunities. Findings indicated that 35% to 50% of respondents said they would act strategically in some situations--particularly to keep one's least preferred party from government; a minority of respondents would vote sincerely regardless of consequences; and over 40% of respondents acknowledged at least one constituency-strategic opportunity. Four factors were identified as likely to reduce a strategic voting response: (1) preference for sincere voting, (2) uncertainty; (3) more concern for long-run success of preferred party than for immediate aversion of least preferred party's victory; and (4) belief that partisanship is an end itself rather than a means to policy. The authors concluded with the implication that although the aggregate significance of strategic voting is uncertain, the potential for strategic action is large. (DB)

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Abstract

STRATEGIC VOTING: INDIVIDUAL REASONING AND COLLECTIVE CONSEQUENCES

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This paper considers aspects of the aggregate impact of strategic voting and factors which affect an individual's psychological availability for strategic action in situations where such action seems appropriate. It does so with questions about action in hypothetical strategic situations. Data come from a sample of British Columbia residents.

Between 35 and 50 percent of the sample claimed they would act strategically in the hypothetical situation, depending on the situation. About 20 percent have actually perceived at least one strategic opportunity and have grasped the strategic alternative. In the 1979 federal election in British Columbia, only about 5 percent acted strategically, but that 5 percent were distributed fairly effectively: one-third of our sample constituencies were vulnerable to strategic effects. Whether the potential vulnerability was realized is not known, but strategic effects may have been limited by offsetting flows of strategic defection.

Four factors may in principle reduce an individual's likelihood of responding strategically in our hypothetical vote situations: (1) utility differences between parties may indicate sincere voting, regardless of strategic opportunity; (2) uncertainty may force the respondent to adopt a minimax regret calculus, which would never indicate second choice voting; (3) the respondent may be more concerned for the long run success of his preferred party than for the immediate aversion of the least preferred party's victory; and (4) he or she may not relate party means to policy ends at all but may instead treat partisanship as an end itself or as a means to social or psychological ends. Each of these factors is tested and, provisionally, the first and fourth seem most powerful. Our utility measures included liking and disliking scales for each party. The effects of liking and disliking were asymmetric.

STRATEGIC VOTING: INDIVIDUAL REASONING AND COLLECTIVE CONSEQUENCES*

This paper has two objectives. First, it will consider the aggregate significance of strategic choice. The number of voters psychologically available for strategic voting and the number actually afforded strategic opportunities are important to an evaluation of plurality electoral systems. Second, we want to examine factors which increase or decrease an individual's disposition to act strategically. This question taps several recent controversies in the study of voting.

Work on strategic voting has relied so far on actual second choice behavior. No one, to the best of our knowledge, has asked respondents whether in fact they have perceived strategic opportunities or how they have acted in response to such opportunities. No one has examined respondents who might be disposed to act strategically but who have not had the opportunity. We try to do both. First, we shall examine response to items setting up hypothetical strategic situations. By this means, we can identify the number of citizens psychologically available for strategic action. We shall then examine strategic behaviour, recognized as such by respondents, in the 1979 Canadian federal election.

The hypothetical questions will also figure in the assessment of factors which affect psychological availability for strategic action. Each factor will correspond to a major controversy in voting research. One debate is over the relative appropriateness of expected utility and minimax regret calculations. A second debate is over whether or not voters must always relate means to ends in particular elections. The third controversy has generated the most heat of all: must all voters relate party means to policy ends? Some voters may simply regard voting as a call to witness, and others may use their vote to serve social or psychological ends rather than policy ones. Where a voter falls on each of the dimensions implied in these debates ought to affect his or her availability for strategic action. We will develop measures to tap these dimensions and subject the measures to a multivariate test, using data from a sample of British Columbia residents.

- I -

Response in Hypothetical Voting Situations

That second choice voting occurs in response to strategic contingencies seems now well established. But not everyone who is prepared to vote strategically is afforded the opportunity. And many people, if given such an opportunity, would not seize it. These considerations moved us to assess directly response to strategic opportunities by creating such opportunities artificially. By this means, we hoped to establish the outer limits of potential strategic action in the electorate and to examine the relationship between strategic potential and strategic fact in recent elections.

We presented respondents with a hypothetical vote situation. After a preliminary series of questions about situations of tension between party and local candidate evaluations, we asked respondents the following question:

> Sometimes the party a person likes best has little chance of winning. Suppose in your riding the party you liked best had very little chance of winning, but the party you liked least had a good chance of winning. In this situation, would you consider voting for a party other than your favourite in order to keep the party you did not like from winning?

We then asked about frequency of real-life, local constituency, strategic situations and actual response in the situations. We also created a strategic opportunity for the party in the whole electorate:

> Let's think now about the province as a whole and not just your riding. Suppose there was an election in which the party you most preferred had little chance of forming the government but the party you liked least had a good chance of forming the government. In this situation, would you consider voting for a party other than your favourite in order to keep the party you did not like from forming the government?[1]

As with the constituency question, we go on to ask about actual government strategic situations.

We posed two questions for both technical and substantive reasons. We began with a technical concern for the validity of response to the local constituency question. In the popular culture of Canadian elections, strategic comment about national or provincial politics is frequent. Most common is speculation over whether voters are prepared to back whichever party has the best chance of forming the government, a bandwagon effect motivated by a preference for majority over minority governments (Leduc, 1977). But some voters are thought to be motivated by a concern to keep certain parties out of government. In provincial elections, the party in question is usually the New Democratic Party. In national elections, each major party is allegedly an object of strategic concern. The frequency of party-strategic comment made us worry that response to our local constituency question would be contaminated by reasoning about national or provincial parties. By creating strategic situations for both government and constituency, we could examine overlap between the two.

We then realized that overlap between party and candidate response need not always be "contamination" of the latter by the former, but instead a perfectly correct perception by respondents of what is truly at stake in a parliamentary, as opposed to a congressional, election. Although studies of strategic voting usually employ evidence from parliamentary systems, they neglect the most basic fact about such systems: choice of local candidates is also choice of governments. Although there is a candidate component to variance in outcomes even in parliamentary elections, the choice between candidates is largely ancillary to the choice between teams. How important it is to defeat the local candidate of one's least preferred party must depend partly on how likely that party is to win the whole election. At the same time, a citizen's opportunity to affect the fate of a party is linked to the competitive situation in his local constituency. The two levels of aggregation are linked, then, and both are worth asking about. In the government question the stakes should be higher but the probability that a voter could make a difference lower than in the local constituency situation.

Table 1 gives facets of response to the hypothetical questions. For each question, a majority would not defect to defeat their least preferred alternative. The number who would defect is greater for the government question than for the constituency question. This may reflect a recognition by respondents that, in a parliamentary system, their choice is fairly directly between teams and only incidentally between the teams' local representatives. Panel B of Table 1 indicates a complex relationship between government and constituency response. There is, of course, a strong positive association between the two. Nevertheless, nearly one respondent in four will switch in one situation but not the other. Twice as many respond strategically exclusively to the party situation as to the constituency situation. Unfortunately, we did not probe our respondents directly to find out if strategic behaviour at one level were contingent on strategic opportunities at the other level. We shall return to the matter indirectly below, however, when we explore actual behaviour in the 1979 election. Table 1.B. also gives a sense of the outer boundary of strategic action. Although only a minority would act strategically in response to cues at any one level, a majority of respondents would defect at some level. The majority is modest, however; many respondents would vote sincerely come what may.

Table 1

Response to Hypothetical Strategic Opportunities

A. Response Within Levels of Aggregation

	Action if Candidate of Most Preferred Party Has No Chance	Action in Most Preferred Party Has No Chance to Form Government
Sincere	59.9%	52.4%
Strategic	40.1	46.5
	(862)	(874)

B. Relationship Between Levels

Constituency	Government	
	Sincere	Strategic
Sincere	43.2%	16.0%
Strategic	7.5	32.9

(834)

Response in Elections

Table 2 gives frequencies of occurrence for actual situations like those described in the hypothetical questions. The evidence in Table 2 is for both federal and provincial elections. According to Panel A, actual strategic contingencies were more frequent in constituencies than for governments. The contrast with the relative frequencies of response to the hypothetical question is welcome. In the hypothetical case, respondents seemed correctly to assess the stakes. Here they seem correctly to assess the probabilities of effect. The objective difference between constituency and government probabilities may be greater in Canada than in many other countries and within Canada may be greatest in British Columbia. In both national elections and in British Columbia provincial elections, a single party has won the overwhelming majority of elections and has tended to do so rather handily. Seats, on the other hand, have tended to turn over rapidly, particularly in federal elections.[2]

Table 2.A. also gives differences in report of strategic situations between kinds of response to the hypothetical questions. For both government and constituency, those who respond strategically to the hypothetical question are modestly more likely to have encountered an actual strategic opportunity. This relationship may indicate social learning. Citizens may come to master an expected utility calculus by actually encountering situations in which it is appropriate. Another interpretation, however, would be that those who have already mastered the calculus are differentially likely to recognize situations requiring it. Yet another possibility is that some respondents misunderstand the hypothetical question and respond affirmatively to the question about actual occurrence only if they actually voted for their second choice; those who give the strategic response to the hypothetical question would be more likely to have voted for a second choice and thus, among those misinterpreting the question, should be more likely to acknowledge the opportunity.

In any case, over forty percent of our respondents acknowledge at least one constituency-strategic opportunity, while nearly thirty percent do so at the ~~party level.~~ The numbers shrink, however, if one combines perception of opportunity with psychological disposition. At the candidate level, about 19 percent are both psychologically "available" to act strategically and have perceived an opportunity to do so. At the government level, about 17 percent are available and have had the opportunity.

Table 2.B. gives the overlap between constituency and government response. Over half the electorate denies perceiving either kind of opportunity. About one-quarter have perceived both kinds of opportunity. Between 20 and 25 percent have seen one kind of opportunity but not the other. Of these respondents, three-quarters report, sensibly, only constituency opportunities.

Now let us consider a specific election. Respondents who claimed to have encountered a strategic situation were then asked to recount as many situations as possible. We recorded whether the election was federal or provincial, its year, and the respondent's action in the situation. As many as three situations were recorded in detail, while summary statistics were kept for the total number of situations and the total number of sincere and strategic responses. About half the perceived opportunities came in the 1979 federal election, for which evidence appears in Table 3. As we expect, more respondents saw constituency opportunities than saw government ones. Among those seeing the opportunity, a

majority at each level acted sincerely. But the majority was much smaller for party opportunities, however, than for constituency opportunities, again as we expect. Even so, at each level of reasoning, only four to six percent of respondents acknowledged having voted strategically.

Table 2

Frequencies of Strategic Opportunity

A. Within Levels

Frequency	Level					
	Constituency Hypothetical Response			Government Hypothetical Response		
	Sincere	Strategic	All	Sincere	Strategic	All
Never	58.9%	52.1%	58.0%	73.7%	64.5%	70.3%
Once	28.1	38.1	30.9	16.5	26.8	20.7
Twice	8.5	8.0	7.9	5.5	6.3	5.6
Three Times	3.0	1.2	2.2	1.8	1.5	1.6
Four or More Times	1.4	0.6	0.9	2.5	1.1	1.7
	(494)	(336)	(891)	(437)	(400)	(873)

B. Relationship Between Levels

Constituency	Government: No Strategic Opportunity	Government: One or More Opportunities	
No Strategic Opportunity	53.0%	5.1	58.1
One or More Opportunities	17.5	24.4	41.9
	70.5	29.5	(855)

Table 3

Perception and Action in the 1979 Federal Election

A. Within Levels

Perception/ Action	Level	
	Constituency	Government
No Strategic Opportunity	84.4%	90.0%
Strategic Choice	5.4	4.0
Sincere Choice	9.3	5.4
Abstain	0.9	0.6
	(890)	(871)

B. Relationship Between Levels

Constituency	Government			
	No Strategic Opportunity	Strategic Choice	Sincere Choice	Abstain
No Strategic Opportunity	80.8%	1.4	1.6	0.2
Strategic Choice	3.2	2.3	0.1	0.0
Sincere Choice	5.6	0.1	3.6	0.0
Abstain	0.6	0.0	0.0	0.4

(853)

Table 3.B. gives the relationship between government and constituency action. Nearly seven percent of respondents acted strategically at one or the other level, or both. The relationship between levels is, of course, positive. Those who voted strategically at one level are disproportionately likely to have done so at the other level, and so on. Only two respondents claimed to have acted strategically at one level and sincerely at the other. Even so, reasoning at one level can still be very detached from reasoning at the other. A majority of those seeing a constituency opportunity, whatever their responses to the opportunity, see no government opportunity. This is perfectly sensible. Whatever a voter may think of the national outcome, he is little likely to be able to alter it: the probability of his altering the constituency outcome must always be higher.[3] A majority of those who see a government-level strategic opportunity also see an opportunity in the constituency. This too is as it should be. For a citizen to affect the national outcome he must work through an effect on the local outcome. Even so, about one-third of those seeing a government-level strategic opportunity do not see a constituency one. Curiously, the percentage with this perception is greater among those who acted strategically than among those who acted sincerely at the government level. Thus, a considerable minority of those who claim to have acted strategically have not in fact attended to the objective probabilities of effect, but only to the payoffs.[4]

What actually are the effects of strategic action? We shall consider them only briefly. Of the roughly five percent of respondents who claim to have acted strategically at a level, three-quarters to four-fifths defect from their long-standing preference.[5] Still, the defection rate was much smaller, between 10 and 15 percent, among respondents who chose the sincere alternative in 1979 or who saw no strategic opportunity at all. So many were the non-strategic voters, however, that their small defection rate produced by far the greater part of the total defection volume in 1979. Defectors in the non-strategic group outnumbered those doing so for strategic reasons by between two and three to one.

Strategic voters were, however, somewhat concentrated in the right places, as indicated by Table 4. Strategic defection would be utterly pointless where one candidate would clearly win, come what may. So would it be in a three-way race. There, strategic defection might conceivably affect the chances of the other two parties, but at the expense of one's own, also competitive party. Only where two of the three candidates were seriously in the running would strategic defection really make sense. In the two-way ridings in Table 4 the maximum distance between the first and second parties was 15.2 points and the average distance was 7.7 points. The average percentage of strategic defectors was five to seven points, depending on the level of reasoning. For individual ridings, estimates of defection must be very shaky. Nevertheless, the distribution does suggest scope for strategic behaviour to affect the local outcome. In five of the eight sample ridings with margins of less than fifteen points, the strategic defectors' proportion exceeded the margin. In the other three, strategic defectors were proportionately less than half the margin. One-third of our sample ridings, then, may have been vulnerable to strategic effects.[6] But only if virtually every strategic defector is from the third party and only if all such defectors choose the same other party will strategic defection have the net effect that truly counts: denying the least preferred party the seat. We suspect that the second condition is rarely met, for reasons we now discuss.

Table 4

The Effect of Constituency Contest on Strategic Perception and Action

Perception/ Action	Contest		
	One-Sided	Two-Way	Three-Way
A. Constituency Situations			
No Strategic Opportunity	86.4%	83.6%	83.1%
Strategic Choice	4.4	6.9	3.3
Sincere Choice	8.4	8.3	13.1
Abstain	0.7	1.2	0.5
	(273)	(434)	(185)
B. Government Situations			
No Strategic Opportunity	91.9%	88.4%	91.1%
Strategic Choice	3.7	4.7	2.8
Sincere Choice	4.4	6.2	5.0
Abstain	0.0	0.7	1.1
	(270)	(422)	(179)

Two factors can blunt the effect of strategic switching on the front runners. First, where the third party is located between the front runners on the evaluative dimension that underlies individual preference rankings, defection from that third party can be to either other party. The more similar the mean distances from the third party to the other parties, the more offsettting the defection will be. Empirically, it is not at all uncommon for the weak party to be the middle one. Second, the net contribution of strategic voting will depend on the extent to which defection is dominated by a single preference order. In Canada, the individual preference rankings which drive second choice voting cannot be explained by only one underlying preference order. Many British Columbians do rank parties from left to right in the conventional sense, with the NDP on the left, the Conservatives on the right, and the Liberals in the middle. But many citizens rank the parties according to a second dimension, which is, we suspect, regional, religious, cultural, linguistic, or some combination of these. On such a dimension, the Liberals occupy one end, as the most Eastern, French,

Roman Catholic, and cosmopolitan party.[7] One can make a case for either the Conservatives or the NDP at the other end.[8] Many respondents generate party rankings which could be assigned to either underlying preference order, but not unambiguously to one in particular. In the 1979 election, the regional-cultural dimension seemed to dominate second choice behaviour. In 1974, from recall evidence in our sample, the left-right dimension seemed to dominate. In each election, however, about one-third of the defection seemed to be under the control of the subordinate factor.[9] In general, the more equal in weight the two factors, the more equivocal the effect of defection, including the strategic variety, should be.

Whatever the effect on front runners, strategic voting does seem to "squeeze" the vote for the third party. But the third party in a given constituency is not always the third party in the whole province or country. In British Columbia, the three national parties have each come first, second, or third at least once in the province-wide federal popular vote over the last six elections. Within the province, each party varies considerably in vote share across ridings. Relative to the underlying distribution of preferences, then, the squeeze exaggerates geographic heterogeneity within the province at any election and increases the volatility over time of each party's vote share.

In summary, the aggregate significance of strategic voting is uncertain. It may exaggerate geographic differences and temporal volatility in the vote, but not necessarily in a way that affects seat totals. The net effect on seats depends partly on the degree to which defection occurs between particular parties, under the control of some dominant evaluative dimension. The number actually defecting for strategic reasons is small.

On the other hand, the potential for strategic action is large. Depending on the definition of strategic opportunity, between 35 and 50 percent of our sample indicated a willingness to respond strategically. At the same time, even in situations in which the probabilities of effect had been manipulated, as it were, to be great, the majority of respondents rejected strategic behaviour. The sample was thus sharply divided. This brings us to the second part of our paper. Who resists the strategic opportunity and why? What does such resistance reveal about the nature of party preference and about rational choice in general?

- II -

Factors Affecting Strategic Response

The expected utility calculus is very compelling. Even if many resist the calculus for psychological or ideological reasons, strong selection forces in the market should ensure its prevalence, especially for investment decisions. Why is this result not as common in politics? More to the point, why would a voter resist the strategic alternative in a situation clearly seeming to demand it? In this section, we consider several possible reasons. From these we shall derive measures and a test of the respective powers of each argument.

First, must we conclude that someone acting sincerely in our hypothetical situations rejects expected utility maximization? Not necessarily. In an expected utility calculus, the utility differences themselves should affect the probability of strategic defection. In the real world utility differences may interact with effect probabilities, of course, but in our example the probabilities are "controlled" at a level high enough to permit direct utility effects.

We expect, first that the larger the utility difference between the second and third preferences, the more likely should be the sincere response. The less the utility difference made by the victory of one's second preference over one's third, the less point there would be in defecting to the second party. The difference between first and third preferences should have a negative affect, in that holding the difference between second and third preference constant, the greater the difference between first and third, the greater must be the difference between first and second. The less acceptable the second party, the less point in facilitating its victory, however unacceptable the third party may also be. The more powerful one or the other or both of these effects, the less argument there need be between proponents of the expected utility calculus and all others.

The current debate over the calculus began with Ferejohn and Fiorina (1974), who argued that for many people the vote situation was one of uncertainty, for which expected utility calculations were inappropriate. More appropriate would be minimax regret reasoning. According to Ferejohn and Fiorina,

> Voting for one's second choice is never minimax regret optimal. This conclusion affords the possibility of a critical test between minimax regret and maximizing expected utility rationality criteria (p. 534, emphasis in original).

The rest is history. Cain (1978) and Black (1978) give frequencies and parameters of second choice voting with, respectively, British and Canadian survey data. Cain, Spafford (1972a; 1972b) and Joyce (1977) give evidence from the same countries' official returns. Rosenthal (1975) reports strategic results in French Fourth Republic returns; Rosenthal and Sen (1977) do the same for Fifth Republic returns. Clearly, second choice voting exists and at least some citizens use the expected utility calculus. But not all need do so. Ferejohn and Fiorina themselves suggested a study of "the possibility of some association between different rationality criteria and the standard socioeconomic divisions of the population" (p. 535). We shall attempt just such a test. If situations differ in the information they afford citizens, so should citizens differ in their ability to assess risk correctly.[10] The more information citizens can absorb, the more likely they should be to choose strategically in our hypothetical situations. It is true that we have not allowed the risk environment to vary, but we have posed a question of some difficulty. The greater the respondents' cognitive capacity, the more clearly they should understand the situation, a precondition for grasping the sophisticated alternative.

But the alternatives to expected utility maximization in a specific election go beyond the minimization of maximum possible regret. Citizens need not confine their time horizons to the immediate election and the parliament it chooses. They may calculate over a longer term. In particular, if they care for the long run success of a party they may reject selling it out in the short run. Certainly, the more they vote strategically in the present the lower the long run chances of their truly preferred party.

Who should embrace such a long run perspective? Could it be that the factors which enhance long run thinking (investment behaviour in general) also enhance one's ability to engage in expected utility maximization? A measure of one factor might also measure the other; it would be easy to explain away any

estimated coefficient on such a measure, including a null one. We think such a fear is premature.

There is no necessary association between long run orientation in the management of one's own assets or in thinking about some public interest and a long run orientation to a specific party. If two or more parties are effectively interchangeable on a question of sufficient salience, then the party or parties not indicated by strategic reasoning can be scrapped. As examples, anti-socialist voters in British Columbia and Manitoba have oriented themselves with considerable precision to avert victories by the New Democratic Party (Joyce; Blake, et al., 1980). One is hard pressed to characterize such voters as inattentive to their long term interests. The need is for an independent measure of time orientation, or of a disposition or indisposition to compromise to achieve results which are acceptable if not fully optimal.

All of the foregoing are variations on an investment model of party preference. A specific party preference is only a means to more basic policy ends. The means may be sacrificed if the ends so indicate. But in accepting an investment theory of partisanship, we are reluctant to reject a consumption one. After all, even investors are also consumers, often very conspicuous ones. Our sense is that, even in British Columbia with its high level of switching between parties over time and between provincial and federal elections, there is a lot of partisanship either for its own sake or for the sake of social or psychological, rather than policy, ends. Social or psychological ends may still work as proxies for substantive policy goals, of course, but they need not always do so. For example, in British Columbia, as elsewhere in Canada, a Roman Catholic is much more likely than a non-Catholic to be a Liberal. He is so despite the Liberal party's considerable distance from many Roman Catholics on social issues.

Our point is not that partisanship is primarily a consumption, or expressive, process. Rather, we believe that both investment and consumption processes govern the formation of party preference. Some individuals may be purely instrumental; others may be purely expressive. Most individuals must be both instrumental and expressive, according to circumstances. Expressive, or consumption partisanship would not admit strategic considerations (unless the partisanship were purely negative); the ends served by such partisanship would not be affected by the outcome of an election. We need, then, some measure of the expressive component of party preference.

Data

The dependent variable in our tests will be the hypothetical vote measure, with sincere respondents scored zero and strategic respondents, unity. The dichotomous dependent variable indicates a maximum likelihood multivariate test; we shall use probit.[12]

Our measures of utility differences are, to the best of our knowledge, original to our survey. We asked respondents about their liking and their disliking for several political objects. Here we shall employ measures of liking and disliking for the three federal parties. Respondents were asked to rate each party on a scale from zero to ten, first in terms of those things they liked about the party. Later they were asked to think about things they disliked about each party, and again to employ a zero to ten metric.[13]

We tried to measure liking and disliking separately to allow for the fact that a citizen can have both positive and negative feelings about the same political object. As well, we wanted to study the net positivity or negativity of sentiment and to distinguish ambivalence from indifference.[14] A summary liking item, such as the feeling thermometer, would not allow us to do any of these things. At the same time, we were not convinced that the net evaluation of an object was simply the sum of gross positive and negative scores. Circumstantial evidence indicates otherwise (Crewe, 1976; Kernell, 1977; Laponce, 1978; Van Wingen, 1979). All of this argues for the separate measurement of liking and disliking, but not necessarily for our particular measures. We could have used a count of positive and negative responses to each party, as in the CPS election studies. But the number of responses does not obviously indicate the intensity of sentiment. Liking and disliking scales go directly to the phenomenon of interest. Our test, then, will include four terms for utility differences. For brevity these will be denoted L13, L23, D13, and D23: liking differences between the first and third and second and third alternatives and the corresponding disliking differences. The larger the L23 and D23, ceteris paribus, the higher should be the probability of voting strategically. The opposite should hold for L13 and D13.

Our attempt to tap the continuum from risk to uncertainty will be made with the respondent's number of years of schooling. We recognize that schooling does not necessarily confer mastery of political reasoning, but appeals to us as less likely to be fraught with error than most other measures of cognitive capacity. Number of years of schooling should affect the likelihood of strategic choice positively.

A direct measure of short or long-term orientation is difficult to construct. Unfortunately we did not ask about such an orientation directly. We did, however, construct an index of "willingness to compromise."[15] The index has reasonable psychometric properties, and seems valid on its face. But is willingness to compromise quite what we mean by long-term orientation? We confess to some worry about this question and about how distinct the variable, as measured, is from the dependent variable and from the utility differences. Willingness to compromise should be positively related to strategic choice.

Even more contentious might be our measure of the expressive or consumption component of the respondent's partisanship. We shall use the liking and the disliking the respondent expresses for his most preferred party, and denote the variables respectively L1 and D1. By themselves, L1 and D1 would not indicate the expressive component but would confound the expressive and instrumental parts. With the utility differences in the equation, however, the pure L1 and D1 should have no further instrumental effect, measurement error aside. Any effect L1 and D1 carry should indicate partisanship for its own sake. Ceteris paribus, L1 should be inversely related to strategic choice. D1, scored oppositely to L1, should be directly related to strategic choice.

Tests

Table 5 gives probit estimates of effects on strategic choice in the hypothetical situations. Feelings about the parties dominate the equations, but in a complex way. Utility differences clearly play a role. L23 has a significant and positive coefficient in each equation. Note, however, that the coefficient on D23 is significant in neither equation. L13 has a significant negative

coefficient each time, as predicted, and is probably picking up the ceteris paribus effect of feelings about the second preference. D13, on the other hand, does not have a significant effect in the government equation. In the constituency equation, the effect of D13 is significant, but positive. Here, D13 is probably absorbing all the effect from disliking differences, as D23 is not significant. If sentiment about the second party has no significant effect on the likelihood of strategic action, then the effect of D13 should indeed be positive; the greater the utility difference, the more one should do to avert a victory by one's least preferred party. Still, disliking plays a simpler and altogether less important role in generating utility differences than does liking.

Table 5

Factors Affecting Response in Hypothetical Vote Situations

Probit Estimates

Independent Variable	Equation	
	Constituency	Government
L13	-0.093 (-2.335)	-0.082 (-2.123
L23	0.105 (2.946)	0.073 (2.146)
|D13|	0.097 (2.621)	0.045 (1.259)
|D23|	-0.048 (-1.341)	0.005 (0.147)
N of Years Schooling	0.026 (1.567)	0.023 (1.395)
Willingness to Compromise	0.058 (1.241)	0.077 (1.686)
L1	0.005 (0.128)	0.013 (0.303)
D1	0.148 (3.838)	0.103 (2.759)
Constant	-1.207 (-2.740)	-0.808 (-1.892)
$\hat{R}^2$	0.062	0.051
(N)	(663)	(663)

Entries in parentheses are t-statistics

The opposite is true for absolute utilities. Feeling about one's most preferred party significantly affects strategic choice, quite apart from feelings about the alternative parties. But only disliking drives absolute judgments. The effect from LL is significant in neither equation.

Party sentiment, in short, is asymmetric. The bulk of the effect of utility differences is from differential liking. All of the effect of absolute utility is from disliking. However much we may have suspected some kind of asymmetry, we are not well equipped theoretically for the exact pattern. Observations about negative voting (Kernell, 1977) might have led us to expect utility differences to work mostly through disliking. Instead, the opposite is true. Similarly, mainstream theory about party loyalty might have misled us in thinking about absolute utility. The (admittedly senescent) traditional model described party preference as a simple loyalty learned early and largely unimpaired by subsequent learning. This seems to imply a dominant role for positive sentiment. Instead, the degree of liking for one's own party is irrelevant. What counts is the degree of disliking for that party. To recapitulate: liking and disliking have asymmetric effects on strategic action. What is one to make of utilitarian reasoning if utility itself is not a homogeneous domain?

The other major lesson in Table 5 is that neither a consumption nor an investment model of partisanship suffices by itself. Both processes are at work. The differential attractiveness of the alternative parties affects the likelihood of strategic choice, quite as an investment model predicts. But so does the pure attractiveness, or rather, unattractiveness of the most preferred party. The latter is surely irrelevant for an investment theory of the vote.

What of schooling and of willingness to compromise? Neither plays a particularly impressive role, but each approaches significance in one equation. In the constituency equation, number of years of schooling just misses significance. Willingness to compromise just misses in the government equation. It could be that measurement error deprives each variable of its rightful effect. For now, however, we must conclude that resistance to the strategic alternative is under the control primarily of feelings about the parties themselves, rather than of cognitive capacity or of willingness to compromise.

Conclusions

We began by probing the boundaries and some dynamics of choice in hypothetical strategic situations. Thirty-five to fifty percent of our respondents said they would act strategically in these hypothetical situations, with the strategic option taken up more frequently to keep one's least preferred party from government than to keep the candidate of that party from winning the local constituency. Respondents correctly evaluated the stakes at each level. They evaluated the probabilities of effect correctly as well: actual strategic situations were reported more frequently at the candidate than at the party level. In the 1979 election, the latter pattern held although a larger proportion of those identifying 1979 as a party strategic situation than as a candidate situation actually defected. Altogether, the number defecting for strategic reasons was not large: four to six percent at each level and about seven percent over all. The bulk of defection from party loyalty was not acknowledged as strategic. Strategic defection was certainly more frequent where candidate level strategic opportunities existed, in two-way races, than where they were absent, in one-sided or in

three-way contests. Even in two-way races, however, strategic defectors were a smaller mean proportion than the mean difference between first and second candidates. Strategic defectors themselves accounted for some of that difference between candidates, to be sure, but probably not enough to be decisive. Further, defection, strategic or otherwise, was controlled by two underlying preference orders. Thus, while strategic defection may have penalized the third party, its effects on the front runners were partially offsetting.

Strategic voting may be of less importance in actual elections than for what it says about the psychological meaning of partisanship. In this respect, we posed arguments of successively greater generality to explain why someone would forego the strategic choice in a situation seeming to require it. Three arguments remained within the realm of rational choice, connecting partisan means to policy ends. The first argument suggests that one may forego acting strategically if the utility payoff from the second choice is sufficiently small. Second, one may not calculate in expected utility terms if the costs of pertinent information are too high. Third, one may calculate over a longer term than a single campaign or parliament and thus not be moved by election-specific strategic considerations. The fourth argument steps out of the rational choice arena and suggests that not every voter connects party means to policy ends. Some value partisanship for its own sake or for the sake of ends not in the policy realm. Such voters would gain nothing by voting for their second preference, while doing so would deprive them of expressive values.

Our tests of these arguments suggested that much sincere voting simply reflects utility differences and is perfectly compatible with an expected utility calculus. We did, however, detect hints of effects on strategic action from both capacity and disposition: schooling appears to increase the capacity for strategic choice, while willingness to compromise seems to assist such choice as well. Independently of the utility differences between parties, feeling for one's own party reduces the likelihood of strategic choice. In a pure investment world such an effect should not exist; partisanship may be a consumer good as well as a form of capital. Finally, although our respondents do let utility calculations affect their behaviour, utility itself does not seem homogeneous; disliking does not fully mirror liking. For several reasons, then, we think that a judgment rendered several years ago by Duff Spafford (1972a) still stands:

> It is not at all clear . . . that a voter will consider "wasted" a vote for a party which is out of contention for victory. Further, that a party is out of contention is not sufficient reason for a voter--even a Downsian voter--to abandon it in favor of another party. The theory of voting in multi-party contests is in need of a thorough re-working. (p. 6.)

Notes

*Data in this paper come from a sample of 1051 British Columbia residents, interviewed in the Summer and Autumn of 1979. A more detailed description of the survey can be found in Blake, et al. (1980). Funding for our research has come from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. We wish to thank the Council for its generous support but absolve it from any responsibility for analyses and opinions reported in this paper. Similarly, we must thank and absolve Tom Kinneavy and Karen Layng for research assistance and Ernst Berndt for timely advice.

[1]We should make two points about the wording of the hypothetical vote items. In the local constituency question, we used the term "riding." In Canada, "riding" has come to be synonymous with "constituency," although used more frequently for provincial electoral districts than for federal ones. It is possible, but not very likely, that some respondents inferred from our use of "riding" that we were interested only in provincial elections; such an inference would depress the frequency of the strategic response.

The inference would seem more likely from our government question, in which we use the expression, "the province as a whole." In framing the question, we did have provincial elections more than federal elections in mind. Even so, the bulk of response about actual strategic situations described federal elections. Respondents may still have been more deterred from the strategic response in the government question than in the constituency question. Such a bias would work against an hypothesis, below, that strategic response should be more frequent to the hypothetical government opportunity than to the hypothetical constituency opportunity.

[2]See Lovink (1973).

[3]Here, however, our reference to "the province as a whole" may have biased response in favour of confirming the hypothesis: we may have underestimated the number seeing the national outcome strategically.

[4]For an experimental perspective on the role of probabilities and payoffs in determining choice see especially Lichtenstein and Slovic (1971). That some citizens do not attend to probabilities but only to payoffs need not indicate irrationality on their part: "When faced with complex multidimensional alternatives, such as job offers, gambles, or candidates, it is extremely difficult to utilize properly all available information. Instead, it is contended that people employ various approximation methods that enable them to process the relevant information in making a decision." (Tversky, 1969, p. 46.)

[5]It may seem odd that <u>any</u> failed to defect. In Canada, it seems, a vote for one's own party can be strategic. Some voters evidently wished to defect from the party they usually prefer, but only if an acceptable other party could win. Failing this, such voters were forced to stay with their long standing preference. In 1979, this curious pattern was most common among Liberals.

[6]The Liberals might have been "denied" two seats, the Conservative two, and the New Democrats one. It is interesting to speculate on the contribution of strategic reasoning to the failure by the Conservative party, now returned to Opposition, to gain a parliamentary majority. The Conservatives were more likely to be net winners than losers, from strategic voting in 1979, however.

[7]The Liberals may be relatively cosmopolitan in two senses. First, their coalition is ethnically more heterogeneous than that of either the Conservatives or the NDP (Laponce, 1972). Second, the Liberals have come to be seen as the party of "cosmopolitans", as opposed to "locals".

[8]Our attempts to unfold preference orders, after Coombs (1964) used liking and disliking scales described at some length below. From the last choices implied in the scales it was quite clear that at least two evaluative dimensions characterized the party preference space. The same is true in national samples; see Elkins (1980). Unfortunately the individual preference rankings which place the Liberals last do not unambiguously indicate the other end of the continuum underlying the rankings. An argument could be made for placing the NDP at the pole opposite the Liberals in that the NDP is the most Western, least French, and least Catholic party. The Conservatives, on the other hand, seem more likely than the NDP to appeal, if covertly, to anti-Eastern, anti-French, and anti-Catholic sentiment. The Conservatives also seem to emphasize a local, as opposed to a cosmopolitan, orientation. It is also possible that the order anchored by the Liberals is not defined in the way we have just suggested but simply in terms of degrees of disenchantment with the Liberals as the seemingly permanent governing party, to be ousted at all costs.

[9]In 1979, defectors from the Conservative party were twice as likely to vote NDP as Liberal. Similarly, NDP defectors were twice as likely to vote Conservative as Liberal. In 1974, Conservative defectors were twice as likely to vote Liberal as NDP, while NDP defectors were twice as likely to vote Liberal as Conservative.

[10]This has already been indicated by Black (1978). His multicandidate calculus of voting explains second choice behaviour better among highly educated respondents than among poorly educated ones.

[11]The distinction here is akin to that drawn by Goodin and Roberts (1975) between "egoistic" and "ethical" political actions, although not completely so. Goodin and Roberts argue that "ethical" actions are not effect oriented but "applaud trying as well as succeeding" (p. 927). Our distinction leaves everybody concerned with effects but differing over the time path of effects. In any case, even a consequentialist theory of morality finds bases of altruistic action akin to the bases of prudence, where the latter is a concern for one's long term interests. See Nagel (1978). The measure we actually use for this factor, below, may in fact tap both time orientation and concern for effects.

[12]Our probit analyses used a subroutine in SHAZAM, an econometric package. The program was developed by Kenneth J. White. See White (1975).

[13]Respondents were asked to evaluate some countries and provinces, the provincial and federal parties, provincial and federal leaders, and provincial and federal candidates. By the time respondents got to federal parties there should have remained no doubt that our liking and disliking questions sought gross rather than net evaluations. For a given political object the liking and disliking items were separated by several other liking and disliking items, to minimize halo effects.

The zero to ten metric, for both liking and disliking, recommended itself to us for several reasons. We were concerned first to detach the metric from the temperature imagery in thermometer scores. Some confusion reigns in Canada these

days as the country has recently shifted from Fahrenheit to Celsius. Further, in neither Fahrenheit nor Celsius is 50 degrees an obvious lukewarm temperature. We noted further that the vast majority of responses to the conventional feeling thermometer fell on the deciles. This suggested to us that eleven response alternatives would more than suffice. The number ten as a perfect score seems to have become the norm, thanks to Bo Derek.

[14] In our own data, liking and disliking scores are strongly negatively correlated for each of the NDP and the Conservative party, but liking and disliking scores are positively correlated for the Liberals. Many respondents must have very ambivalent feelings toward the Liberals, not surprisingly so in light of how long that party has been in power.

[15] The "Willingness to Compromise" Scale consists of four agree-disagree items. These are as follows (with the "compromise" answer and the percentage of the sample taking that position in parenthesis):

(1) It is never right for a politician to give up even one of his ideals or principles in order to achieve other important goals. (disagree - 49%)

(2) The give and take of political compromise is the best way we have to handle the conflicts that arise between groups in our society. (agree - 67%)

(3) Most of the compromising that goes on in politics turns out to be bad for the public. (agree - 72%)

(4) Compromise and bargaining among politicians is necessary to make democracy work. (agree - 72%)

Although this does not form a perfect scale by Guttman's criteria, it is quite homogeneous by other criteria. The face validity certainly suggests that it taps the dimension desired, and the inter-item correlations are all positive and moderately high. The item-scale correlations are very satisfactory. We are satisfied that, although short, this scale is valid and reliable enough for our purposes. Note also that there are two "agree" and two "disagree" responses, so "acquiescence response set" cannot be a problem.

We do not report the results of the Guttman scalogram analyses, because we believe there may be a logical or arithmetic error in the SPSS Scalogram Subroutine. For example, we found one instance of a minimum marginal reproducibility which was higher than the average item difficulty, which is logically impossible.

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